

*Supply—Citizenship and Immigration*

39,261 from the British Isles and 164,189 others. A percentage basis for those four years indicates that approximately 25 per cent of the total number of immigrants from overseas were British nationals. I suggest this constitutes a major change in the immigration policy of this country.

Whether it has been a policy change or an accidental occurrence, I do not know. I put those facts and figures before the committee for the purpose of assisting in our investigation of the problem. But I think that if we continue conducting immigration into this country without an adequate policy in respect of racial origins that we expect to have in Canada in the future, we might be making a serious mistake.

At the same time I am not here to say that we should exclude one type or another of the races throughout the world. But it appears to me that perhaps by indirect means we are making it more advantageous or easier for some groups to come to this country than others.

The question arises: Why? Why should it be easier for certain people from Europe to come here under assisted passage schemes than it is for others? Is there a policy in this respect, or are we just drifting along? Do we want to see this country end up at the turn of the century, if Mr. Gurton's estimate is correct, with people of British stock numbering only 32 per cent. I do not know at the moment whether that would be desirable or not, but I pose the question for the benefit of the committee.

**Mr. Macdonnell:** It would require a man of sterner stuff than I am to make a speech at this time of the last day of the session. But I do want to make one or two comments. In the first place I want to underline what was said by the hon. member for Kamloops, that it is highly undesirable that this debate should have been left to the last day. I suppose one can argue very sincerely that probably at the present time the immigration department and the debate of its estimates are more important than any other debate we have had. What we are doing actually in the immigration department is to decide on what kind of people we are going to be, as the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre said, or, to bring it closer home, we are deciding on the kind of people with whom our descendants are going to intermarry in the coming years.

I repeat, it is unfortunate in the highest degree that it is left like this. I suppose, however, it has sanction, or even sanctification in the eyes of the government because I understand that great parliamentary

manager, the late prime minister, Mr. Mackenzie King, laid it down as a guiding rule that in the case of the controversial departments it was wise to leave them until the end, and then the heat would drive the opposition out and they would get away without much debate. I have no doubt that is a consideration. Perhaps it is a case of the evil that men do lives after them. I leave that to the judgment of the committee.

I would repeat that it is unfortunate that it is almost impossible to give this great problem the consideration which it should have at the moment. Of course the reason it is controversial is the fact of unemployment. We know that only three or four years ago the minister used to speak freely and very interestingly about immigration, but he has not had very much to say lately, and certainly he did not get very far in what he said this morning. I do want to raise this question because I believe it is pertinent. I hold in my hand a letter signed by a gentleman by the name of F. S. Walker. This letter appeared in the *Globe and Mail* on June 11, and reads in part as follows:

I am a recent immigrant to Canada. Is it too much to ask Canadian immigration authorities not to send skilled men from the engineering trades to Canada until Canadian industry can absorb them? Skilled men arriving here at the present time are, like myself, unable to find employment, their skill being lost to England and not wanted in Canada.

There is more to the letter which I shall not read, but I shall read the editorial note at the bottom:

National employment officials report that conditions in certain engineering lines are currently "a bit tight" but that they hope for improvement later this year.

I do hope the minister will let us know just what is the line taken by our officials in Europe. It will be very hard for them of course to come clean and to say that jobs are not easy to get in Canada at the moment, but I do hope that what this letter depicts is not what is commonly being done; in other words, that people are not being encouraged to give up skilled jobs in Europe and to come here.

I shall not detain the committee longer, Mr. Chairman. I wish to repeat, sometimes we in the opposition are told that however little influence we seem to have at the moment, our words are not always wasted, and that they may even be listened to and remembered on future occasions. I do hope that next year this important subject will not be left to the hot 26th of June when the serried ranks of the government are trying to drive us out.